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One thing has been proved clearly during the past month, that some members of the organization need to be taught the fundamentals of liberty of thought and speech. To the credit of the officials of the Legion in St. Louis, Missouri, be it said, that they at once repudiated the action of a small group of the members who induced a local innkeeper to close his hotel temporarily to a convention of Liberals from all parts of the country. Likewise in Washington threats of some of the Legion's members to prevent Fritz Kreisler from playing with the New York Symphony Orchestra called forth from the district executive committee of the Legion a statement that it "would look with extreme disfavor and disapprobation upon any lawless demonstration or mob violence instituted by any persons," such action being sure to "indicate a lack of faith in the established institutions of the Republic, the fundamental purpose of the Legion being the preservation of law."

If such be the fundamental purpose of the Legion, then the judicial department of government, whether municipal or national, must be left to deal with alleged or actual disloyalty, and to decide when revolutionary radicalism passes the bounds of toleration and becomes anarchy. No voluntary organization, however admirable in its personnel and fine in its motive, can be trusted to execute justice, inflict violent punishment, and drive men forth from home and shop.

We are confirmed in the necessity of this word of warning by noting how many other journals of eminence throughout the country have struck the same note lately. The Legion has too fine possibilities to become wrecked at its start by any surrender of its policy to its few members who see red. Far truer to the best ideals of the Legion were the men of the Centralia, Washington, local Legion. When some of their own members on the anniversary of Armistice Day were shot, they did not fire back; but instead they set about protecting the suspected assassins from the violent mob. This showed moral restraint, a sense of law, a disciplined will, and subordinated passions.

That this criticism of the press of the country is having its effect, we infer from the slogan that has been chosen by the Legion's officials in Pennsylvania. "Facts Before Acts" they say. Nor is this all. The *American Legion Weekly*, in a recent issue, has said:

"Pass upon no measure affecting your post or your community without the most careful consideration. A matter of immediate local importance may be presented in such manner as to arouse your immediate sympathy. It may appear to be right and the obvious thing to do. But if the public interest is involved every phase of every subject should be thoroughly canvassed. Local posts in many instances have adopted as a policy to pass on no vital or important question without letting it repose in committee for

two weeks under detailed investigation, except in a case of emergency.

"Such deliberation will prevent an ill-advised or premature action, which might neutralize local public sympathy and interest in the post. It is the part of wisdom. Nothing will impair more quickly than impulsive resolutions and actions taken without full knowledge of all the facts and circumstances involved."

These evidences of wisdom among the leaders of the Legion may well cause us to expect the organization to survive and to be useful. The hope we placed in these best of our young men continues. This is as it should be.

## CONSISTENCY QUITE IGNORED

WHETHER consistency be called a hobgoblin or a jewel, and it is called both, it is quite ignored when it comes to applying our theories about internal matters to conditions that are international.

Notwithstanding our scramble to check wild radicals in our midst, our sedition legislation proposed in both Houses of Congress savors less of repression than some had expected. Senator Sterling, of South Dakota, has introduced a bill, now reported from the Senate Committee, which expresses, we believe, fairly well the collective judgment of our national legislature. The purpose of the Sterling bill is to eliminate those persons who would overthrow the government by force or violence. It is not the plan of the bill to forbid freedom of speech in America, except speech which advocates that brand of anarchy which is based upon violence. From this measure we quote:

"That it shall be unlawful for any person to advocate or advise the overthrow, or to write or knowingly to print, publish, utter, sell, or distribute any document, book, circular, paper, journal, or other written or printed communication in or by which there is advised the overthrow, by force or violence, or by physical injury to person or property, of the Government of the United States or of all government, or to advise or advocate a change in the form of government or the Constitution of the United States or resistance to the authority thereof by force or violence or by physical injury to person or property, and unlawful for any person by force or violence to prevent, hinder, or delay or attempt to prevent, hinder, or delay the execution of any law of the United States, or the free performance by any of its officers, agents, or employees of his public duty."

If we have here a fair expression of the views of our law-making body, and if the law-making body is in any sense representative of the people, it would seem that there has been a return in the public consciousness to the letter and the spirit of the first amendment of the Constitution of the United States. The law-makers are quoted as saying that the people of the United States can advocate Sovietism, Bolshevism, or any other "ism"

so long as they stop short of an appeal to violence. "So long as freedom of speech or of the press" is lawfully employed, infringing unlawfully upon no private rights, disturbing the public peace to the injury of no innocent person, we must all abide by the provisions of this amendment. The remedy for injury in America is law, operating through the courts, and the ballot. We are in sympathy with legislation designed to overcome recourse to violence.

But here the inconsistency of it all appears. With all our opposition to violence within the State, the instinctive first solution of an international grievance is to appeal to force. Opposition to anarchy within nations, right and natural, is forgotten when the issue is between one nation and another. Issues exist between this country and Mexico, and men and newspapers tell us that the difficulties can be settled only by the sword. "We must clean up Mexico next," we were told over and over again by army officers in France, particularly after the armistice. The World War was the perfect and natural expression of the reign of international anarchy following inevitably a universal reliance upon force.

Our perfectly reasonable opposition to force, indeed to all forms of anarchy on the part of other nations, so far as its internal affairs are concerned, seems childish and irrational and inconsequential when compared with our international incompetencies. There must be a Sterling bill for the nations if we are to attain unto any measure of abiding international self-respect.

## OPEN DIPLOMACY FOR JAPAN

**P**ROGRAMS may come and programs may go, but ideas once let loose in the world pursue their inevitable courses. When on January 8, 1918, President Wilson spoke before the joint session of the two Houses of Congress, addressing himself to the program of the world's peace, a program which he called the "only possible program," he stated as his first demand: "Open covenants of peace, openly arrived at, after which there shall be no private international understandings of any kind, but diplomacy shall proceed always frankly and in the public view." This requirement enunciated by the President set forth no new idea. It was an expression of a belief increasingly believed in and pleaded for by political writers, especially during the last century. Disraeli, in his vindication of the British Constitution, argued that, "There is no wisdom like frankness." Wherever men have stood for sincerity they have by that act paid a tribute to the principle heading Mr. Wilson's fourteen points. This principle of plain honesty, in no sense hostile to the demands of tact and common sense, will continue to press its undying claim to recognition and acceptance.

Mr. K. Hara, Premier of Japan, speaking to the members of the Japanese Cabinet and sixty-five other notables of Japan, taking the ground that the day of Machiavellian diplomacy and international bargains made in the dark is passed, and that the new era, whether the old-line diplomats of Japan like it or not, of "open covenants" has arrived, and pointing out that Japan is one of the five great Powers charged with the preservation of the peace of the Far East, said:

"The war has brought about the dawn of a new era in the world, and in the future international affairs are to be managed through the co-operation of the Powers. The result is that militarism has been absolutely discarded and the Powers are to work conjointly for the sake of world peace. In every country there are men who find it hard to abandon the old ideas. They remain blind to the general current of the world and strive for the acquisition of rights and interests. It should be remembered, however, that such old-school politics is no longer admissible in the present-day diplomacy.

"There is no doubt that the Peace Treaty will be ratified by the Powers at no distant date, though it is very probable that its operation will result in the cropping up of various new problems. One thing that should be borne in mind, however, is that in the conduct of diplomacy in the future Machiavellianism, which has hitherto been thought by some to be an indispensable requisite of successful diplomacy, will have no place in its display.

"Sincerity and straightforwardness will in future be the guiding principle on which the conduct of diplomacy should be based, although this will be a new phenomenon to a certain class of publicists, to whom the maintenance of international co-operation seemed tantamount to national humiliation."

No nation is more sensitive to the criticisms from other nations than Japan. Her pride alone would account for that. The rise of the young democrats, the revision of policies toward Korea, the explanations of her attitude toward China, this speech of the Premier, all indicate the sweep through Nippon of the breath of liberalism crossing the world. We may watch with interest the effects of Japan's new policy of open diplomacy as she goes about her plans for a "Monroe Doctrine of the East," as she solves her problems arising from her imperialistic party, as she treats the four-Power banking consortium set up for the financing of China, as she acts toward Shantung. The anti-Japanese sentiment in China, in America just now, adds also to the burdens the new policy will have to bear. We may believe with Count Okuma that "The Japan of today is no longer the Japan of Japan, but the Japan of the world." But, better, we may believe that out of the new democracy characteristic of the new education and the new statesmanship in Japan, beginning with the Meiji Era, we shall yet agree